Be Pro Be Proud SC

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Be Pro Be Proud SC Brings Hands-On Career Experience to SC Students

Be Pro Be Proud SC is a workforce initiative that introduces students to high-paying, in-demand fields, many of which are available to them upon graduation from high school with little-to-no educational debt incurred.

Columbia, S.C. – To assist in filling the job openings that are quickly being created due to an aging workforce in skilled-labor careers, the Associated Industries of South Carolina Foundation -- comprised of the SC Chamber of Commerce, the S.C. Trucking Association, the Home Builders Association of South Carolina the Forestry Association of South Carolina, and Carolinas AGC – launched the **Be Pro Be Proud SC** project in 2020 in an effort to attract talent to fields including transportation and logistics, utilities, construction, and diesel technology. According to statistics from the US Department of Labor, the number of jobs available in these sectors are projected to increase by as much as 25% over the next decade in South Carolina.

The focal point of the project – the Be Pro Mobile Workshop -- is a custom-designed, 53-foot 18-wheeler featuring hands-on simulators for commercial driving, forklift and heavy equipment operation, and welding, plus VR experiences for construction trades and diesel tech. With the scheduling assistance of the Department of Employment & Workforce (SC DEW), the Workshop primarily visits middle and high schools around the state, with occasional business and community events woven into the calendar.

“The Be Pro Be Proud SC initiative motivates and arms hardworking South Carolinians with knowledge of lucrative employment opportunities,” said Gov. Henry McMaster. “This project builds pathways for South Carolinians to achieve their very own American dream.”

In addition to the hands-on experience, visitors will walk away knowing where to find descriptions of every featured profession on the Workshop, training resources for each profession, and job boards from the over 40 companies and associations– large and small, public and private – who support Be Pro’s efforts.

“Essential industries like the kind that build, grow, make, and move things have relied on skilled professionals since the dawn of commerce,” says Rick Todd, President and CEO of the South Carolina Trucking Association. “We are proud to take this experiential show on the road so curious folks can see and learn about the career opportunities in these accessible, much-needed industry sectors.”

Want to bring the Mobile Workshop to YOUR school or event? Visit the Be Pro website to see the current semester Tour Schedule for the Workshop, and Request a Tour Stop if you want to be part of the action. For information on Apprenticeships, Grants, and Career Exploration, visit the Resource Center on the site. Follow Be Pro Be Proud SC’s Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn pages to stay informed about the latest happenings.

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About Be Pro Be Proud SC:

The Be Pro Be Proud SC project, modeled after the Arkansas Be Pro Be Proud initiative that began in 2016, was created and launched in 2020 to close the gap between job seekers and employers as companies seek to retain and replenish a qualified workforce as more experienced workers begin to retire. Taking a unique, targeted approach to removing the stigma from "blue-collar" jobs, its goal is to educate students and the public on the appeal and the importance of these jobs for our economy.

Modules simulating the actual work in various sectors are housed within the workshop, which travels throughout the state to schools, fairs, career centers, conventions, government events, military re-entry programs, and more.

Be Pro Be Proud SC is made possible through a public-private collaboration of leaders of the Associated Industries of South Carolina Foundation (AISCF) and the Department of Employment & Workforce (DEW), and other state education, workforce, and economic development agencies. Capital to build the mobile workshop and provide the job simulators comes from the private sector. DEW and other public sectors fund the campaign's operation.

Learn more at www.beprobeproudsc.org

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